



California Postsecondary Education Commission

770 L Street, Suite 1160 • Sacramento, California 95814

www.cpec.ca.gov • (916) 445-1000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact

Karen Humphrey

khumphrey@cpec.ca.gov • (916) 445-1000

Commission Will Examine Gender Gap for Males in California Postsecondary Education

SACRAMENTO — June 22, 2006 — California mirrors a national gender gap in which females increasingly outnumber males in college enrollment and degree attainment. This gap is described in a new report that will be delivered to the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) at its next meeting scheduled for June 27-28, 2006, in Sacramento. The report was requested by John Perez (Los Angeles), a member of the Commission.

Growing steadily for more than two decades, the gap is evident in all segments of California higher education. The report shows combined enrollment at the state's two university systems in 2004 was only 43.6% male, even though males comprised more than 51% of the state's college-age population in that year. Also in 2004, less than 41% of those receiving Bachelors degrees were male. The disparities in enrollment and degree attainment are seen across all major ethnic groups, with the largest gap visible among African American students.

Howard Welinsky, Chair of the Commission, said, "It is important to pay attention to significant disparities in college enrollment and outcomes, as they may have serious implications both for access to higher education and for the state's future workforce. This report makes clear the need for more research on the causes and effects of the gender gap and on solutions/strategies that can help males, without undoing the positive progress made by females."

Murray J. Haberman, Executive Director of the Commission, noted that a March 2006 Commission study that compared college eligibility rates to the state's high schools' Academic Performance Index, showed that males are less likely than females to become eligible for CSU and UC. Said Haberman, "Data in this paper confirms males are doing worse in high school and

graduating in smaller numbers than females -- which leads directly to the postsecondary gender gap. We must find a way to increase the proportion of males going to, and graduating from, our colleges and universities. The implications of not doing so could have a negative effect on our society in terms of meeting our 21st century job needs.”

The report, which can be found at http://www.cpec.ca.gov/Agendas/Agenda0606/Tab_07.pdf, provides a range of data on enrollment and degree attainment, both overall, and in selected professional disciplines.

###

The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. The Commission’s primary focus is to ensure that the state’s educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities.